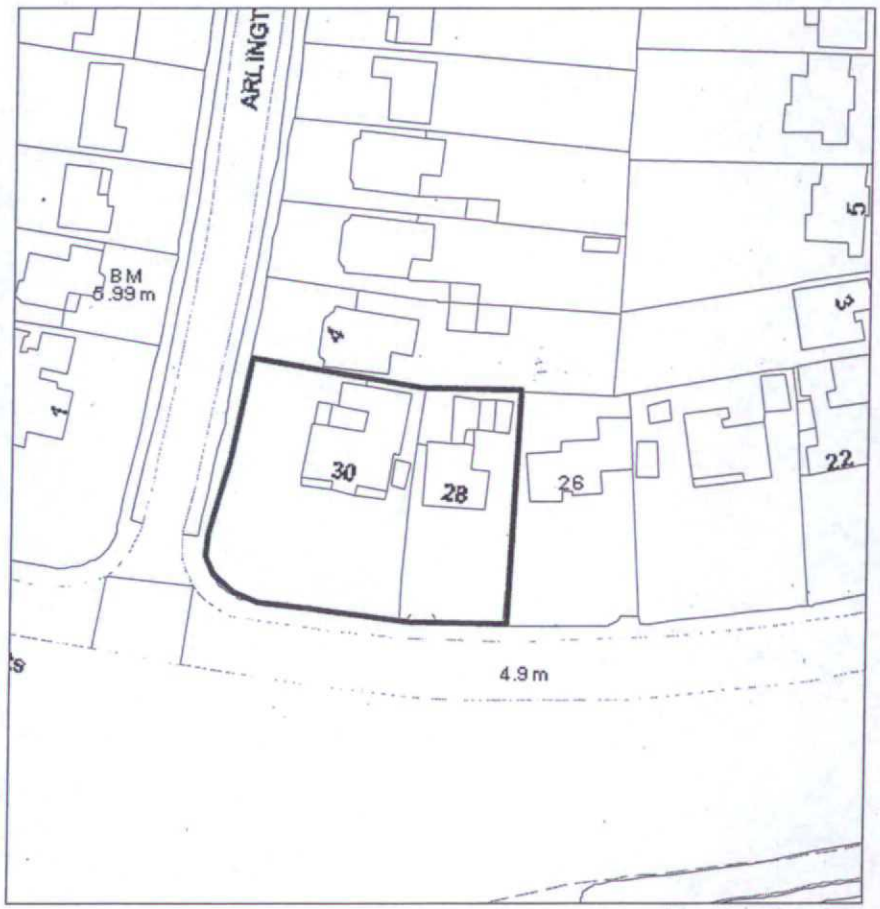
CATEGORY A

Strutt And Parker FAO Mr P Dowsett
Leslie Christopher Homes

WB/07/1078/FULL
GOR
PD

Location : 28 and 30 Marine Drive

Proposal: Demolition of 28 and 30 Marine Drive and redevelopment of the site with a block of 8 flats with associated landscaping and underground parking.



Not to Scale

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1. THE PROPOSAL AND THE SITE

This is a full application to redevelop two detached houses and replace these with a 3 storey development of 8 flats, comprising two linked buildings with underground parking for 16 cars.

The Site

The site is located in the west part of the residential suburb of Goring, close to the Goring Gap. It faces the seafront and forms part of the Goring Hall estate. The plot is sited on the western corner of Marine Drive and Arlington Avenue, is rectangular in shape and essentially flat and has a given site area of 0.18 hectares.

Inter war, two storey detached villas adjoin the site immediately to the east and predominate beyond these to the west and east, with some limited later infill development, including the 1950's development of flats at Cowdray Court, Marine Drive, just to the west and No 12 Marine Drive, to the east, built in the 1970s. The adjacent two houses (Nos. 26 and 24 Marine Drive) are, perhaps, more distinguished than many of their neighbours, and No 1, Arlington Avenue on the opposite (south east corner) of Marine Drive and Arlington Avenue, the most distinctive and is recognised as such by its Local Interest Building designation. All are well set back from Marine Drive with large open, front gardens but relatively shallow rear gardens. They feature hipped roofs and most have white rendered walls.

The houses in Arlington Avenue are also large detached villas dating mainly from the early post war period but with generous and mature front and rear gardens. They too have hipped roofs, though the houses are mainly brick faced with the exception of Nos. 4 and 6, immediately to the north of the application site, which incorporate a flat roofed, white rendered element on their southern elevations. No 6 includes at least one active terraced area to the rear with a south facing elevation, though none of the similarly featured terraces in No 4 are currently used. Opposite (south) of the development site is a popular and relatively deep, grassed area between the beach and Marine Drive.

The application site accommodates the large, two storey, art deco villa at No 30 with its hipped green pantiled roof, white rendered walls and balcony and the smaller 1970s infill, two storey development at No 28, comprising two flats, with its gables roof and brick and tile faced walls. No 30 incorporates a large, hipped roof attached double garage and extension, a conservatory and smaller lean-to roofed shed at the rear which abut or lie very close to the boundary with No 4 Arlington Avenue, to the north. It is currently vacant and in a somewhat untidy condition.

Vehicular access to No 30 is off Arlington Avenue. There is no rear garden in practice and the font garden is laid to lawn with some shrubs by the boundary which comprises a smaller brick wall surmounted by a timber fence front. No 28 is occupied and contains a large flat roofed double garage which is linked to the house and adjoins the boundary with No 26, to the east. Vehicular access is off Marine Drive. The large front garden is laid to lawn and partly to hardstanding and is bounded by a low hedge. The rear garden boundaries are more substantial.

The Proposal

The proposal has been the subject of extensive pre-application discussions and entails demolishing the existing properties and constructing a three storey development, arranged as two separate buildings, interlinked by a part one and part two storey glazed and recessed (5 metres) building. They sit generally some 2 metres forward of the existing buildings on the Marine Drive frontage and between 1.5 and 3 metres forward of the Arlington Avenue frontage. A single storey conservatory in the shape of a drum projects some 2 metres further beyond this on the south west corner of the development. The development approximates to the depth of the existing attached single storey buildings at the rear but infills the space between the existing two houses by means of the glazed link. Underneath the building is a full basement, providing storage space, including for bicycles.

The development is stepped on all elevations so the third storey, in the form of the two pavilions, is set back between 1 and 4 metres from the first floor on most elevations. The corner building is the larger and more dominant element in the composition and is 9.6 metres tall, the adjacent building being some 8.8 metres tall. These approximate to the height of the existing buildings at No 30 and 28 they replace. Both adopt a contemporary interpretation of the (Art Deco) modernist style, with flat roofs, copious use of curves in corners, the conservatory and the eastern building pavilion, extensive glazing, white rendered walls and flat roofs. Balconies and roof terraces are used to exploit sea views from the upper floors but confined to the front. All windows facing north or east on the upper floors which serve habitable rooms are either obscure glazed or high level.

Separate pedestrian access is provided from Marine Drive via a timber flood gate to a front door in each building. Vehicular access is from Arlington Avenue using a slightly broadened existing access. The drive is two lane and slopes down steeply to disappear underground close to the corner conservatory. It then sweeps round to serve and underground car park with space for 16 cars, including one disabled space. Direct access to the flats is provided by two lifts and stairs through the adjacent basement.

The front garden is to be soft landscaped, with two water features. A low boundary hedge sits behind 1 metre tall white rendered walls which are designed to serve as flood barriers and also accommodating bin stores behind. The applicants report that the scheme has adopted sustainable design principles and aims to achieve an Eco Homes rating of "Very Good", with high levels of thermal insulation, use of natural ventilation and the application of a sustainable waste strategy. Micro renewable energy generation is shown in the form of solar voltaic panels on the roof of the link building and two pole-mounted (7 metres tall) wind turbines by the Marine Drive boundary frontage. The potential to introduce a ground source heat pump to supplement the renewable energy generation is also provided for.

The development is arranged as 4 x 2 bed flats and 4 x three bed flats and is designed to meet the Lifetime Homes standard.

The application is supported by a Flood Risk Assessment, Natural Light Impact study, Waste Minimisation Strategy and Stage 1 (highway) Safety Audit.

2. APPLICANT'S DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT.

Summary

"The proposal seeks to demolish No 28 and No 30 Marine Drive and replace them with a modern development that is inspired by and takes reference from Art-deco buildings that became very popular along the Sussex seafront and in particular in the Worthing area. The development constitutes 8 apartments, underground parking and landscaping. No.30 Marine Drive is currently vacant and boarded up to keep the property secure from vandalism and illegal entry. The existing buildings are set back from the road and have open frontages typical of the area.

The development reflects the height, massing, layout and footprint of the existing buildings. It respects the synergy of the site and conforms to the open character of the area.

This proposal meets the criteria set out in the local Plan policy. It is of a high standard of design that enhances the appearance of the locality. The siting, layout, density, orientation of the development take full account of the site and its surroundings. The form and character, which includes height , massing, scale and proportions, are compatible with the existing and neighbouring buildings. The relationship between built form and open space remains similar to that found on site at present.

The proposal includes features that minimise the developments energy requirements, incorporate schemes to create sustainable energy in the form of photovoltaic tiles, wind capture turbines. It is DDA compliant where possible and addresses any issues concerned with flooding. The proposal maximises the use of the site, making better use of a previously developed site, whilst respecting the built form of the area. The scheme is in accordance with the Development Plan and should be considered favourably. There are no material considerations that indicate otherwise."

Other relevant extracts

"DESIGN – USE AND GENERAL PRINCIPALS

The site is currently set out as three residential units, No.28 is divided into two separate flats and No.30 is one single dwelling. The density of the existing site is 15 dwellings per hectare. With the surrounding development being of similar low density. There is no requirement for this density to be preserved in this locality and it is preferable that such a site would seek to make better use of previously developed land through its redevelopment, making a more efficient use of the land is in accordance PPS1 and (PPS3)

The proposal should seek to maintain the open frontage that is present in the local area and in doing so the site of the new development is set back from the road frontage.

The proposals are design led and derives their styling from local and regional examples of art deco seaside architecture. The proposals seek to build on this seaside heritage with modern materials and a new design that makes the best use.

DESIGN – AMOUNT & LAYOUT

The site, is in a highly visible location on a corner plot with direct views along the Marine Driver frontage and out to sea. The design approach seeks to create a high quality building that sits well in the plot, conforms to the heights of the surrounding buildings and increases the visual quality of the area. The layout of the new development is dictated by the siting of the existing units. The emphasis is on properties set back from the road.

The proposal increases the density of the development on site to 42 units per hectare, this is the median between the governments guidelines of 30-50 dwelling per hectare.

DESIGN – SCALE

The Height of the proposal is the same as the existing buildings on site. The buildings are constructed as two separate blocks that recreate the symmetry of the existing dwellings with the corner plot being more dominant.

Through pre-application discussions the scale of the development has reduced, incorporating comments from the Planning Team. The height, bulk, form and massing were reduced and windows to the side and rear have been designed to minimise overlooking.

The windows of the development have been sensitively designed to avoid the overlooking to neighbouring properties. Similarly the shape of the building reflects the bulk of the exiting buildings on site.

The design process started by utilising the existing buildings on site and extending. This was discounted due to the bulk and mass that would be created. Increased height followed but this was judged to be incongruous to the area and overbearing on the neighbouring properties.

By moving the parking underground the height of the building could be reduced, but the mass of the building as one unit would still be incongruous. Consequential this style of scheme was discounted.

The scheme was split into two distinct units each slightly different in character. The height, bulk and massing of one of the building was reduced to make the building subordinate and windows were designed to minimise overlooking. After discussions with (officers) the final scheme has been designed to read as two separate buildings, in order to be sympathetic to the rhythm of the road

and to tie in with the existing streetscape. The height of the buildings reflect the ridge heights of the existing properties. Typically as the existing building steps down in the plot so does the proposal. Whilst there is some additional mass to the roof, the proposal reflects a similar level of built form to the existing dwellings.

Policy DEV1 of the Structure plan and policy BE1 of the Local Plan consider the design of the development. This proposal meets the criteria set out in the policy BE1 as it is of a high standard of design compatible with its surroundings and enhances the appearance of the locality. The siting, layout, density, orientation take full account of the site and its surroundings. The form and character, which includes height , massing, scale and proportions, are compatible with the existing buildings and the design seeks to enhance the appearance locally. The relationship between built form and open space remains similar to that found on site and again, is compatible with the character ands appearance of the locality.

The applicant has discussed the proposal with the all of the adjoining neighbours, general comments have been favourable.

DESIGN – APPEARANCE

PPS 3 acknowledges that good design is fundamental to using land efficiently and LPAs should facilitate this by identifying distinctive features that define the character of the area. This is particularly important when the proposal involves intensification of the existing urban fabric. When a scheme is well designed it can enhance the character and quality of the area. Careful consideration has been paid to the appearance of the development .

Taking a reference from the Art-Deco buildings that became very popular in the 1920's and 1930's along the Sussex seafront this project seeks to add a modern accent to this style. A mix of shapes and forms create an interesting façade picking up the geometric sleek and dramatic cubic forms that were typical of an Art-Deco building. Modern technology allows for a higher percentage of glass and this allows for fantastic views from the building but also allows a separation between the two structures in the form of a linked extension.

The boundary wall of the development seeks to improve the appearance of the site through a more sensitively designed rendered wall that changes in height between the two existing plots, to emphasise the curtilage between the buildings. This, along with a change of landscaping, will further the illusion that the site remains split into two identifiable sections with an open frontage compatible with the character of the area."

3. CONSULTATIONS

The **Principal Borough Engineer** has made the following comments:

"In this instance the pre application studies and liaison with the EA seem to have covered all the points that I would have raised with the Developer. The Flood Risk Assessment has covered all the major risks and recommended mitigation measures. My only concerns are the certainty of the predicted sea levels in 2115 and the allowance for wave action on the boundary wall which will be designed to prevent flooding of the property. Whilst these estimates are realistic now can we add a condition that they must, at say 10 or 20 year intervals, review the guidance and increase the wall height as necessary within reasonable limits? I'm saying this because there is a degree of uncertainty in any prediction and if we are to be serious about preventing flooding we should all be reviewing and reacting to best estimates and predictions.

As a general comment this is the best FRA that I have ever seen and an example for how they should be done."

The **Sussex Police Crime Prevention Officer** has no specific comments. Sent standard guidance.

The **Strategic Housing Planning and Regeneration Manager** comments that the density, massing and scale do not appear to be out of character with the area but planting appears minimal. The relationship between the development and the houses in Arlington Avenue will require careful consideration. Parking is in excess of the maximum standard of 12.

The comments of the **Highway Authority** are awaited.

The comments of the **Environmental Health Manager** are awaited.

The comments of the **Environment Agency** are awaited.

The comments of **Southern Water** are awaited.

4. REPRESENTATIONS

Some 50 representations have been received from local residents, principally from Marine Drive and Arlington Avenue, objecting to the scheme. In addition, objections have been received from the Worthing Society, Goring by Sea Residents' Association and the Ilex Conservation Group also objecting to the scheme. The principal concerns are as follows:-

i) The pseudo Art-Deco proposed is hideous and completely out of character with all the other buildings along this section of the seafront.

ii) The proposed building is too large and dominates all the other houses and flats along The Drive. The proposal is three floors high whilst all the existing are two floors.

iii) The proposed plot has a beach frontage of approximately 52 metres, whilst Cowdray Court, to the west of this plot, with four flats and garages has a frontage of 27 metres and blends in perfectly with the surrounding houses and flats.

iv) Whilst a block of flats like the proposal may look okay in Benidorm or Malibu, it just looks ridiculous in Goring.

v) The joining of two properties would be out of scale with the local environment.

vi) The moving of the building line on the western aspect along Arlington Avenue would adversely affect the view along the otherwise constant line upheld by the rest of the road.

vii) The southern boundary of the proposed building falls further south of the existing line of neighbouring properties.

viii) All neighbouring properties have pitched roof construction and, therefore, none has a southerly aspect from that height.

ix) The development would result in the demolition of two substantial houses. The whole area is an attractive entity featuring individually designed houses and since its development in the early 1960s has remained unaltered.

x) It is clear that the two properties have been deliberately allowed to fall into a state of disrepair and this is merely to try and persuade the committee that there is no alternative but to demolish and allow redevelopment of the flats.

xi) The two houses are substantially constructed and could be easily brought into a satisfactory condition when they would undoubtedly attract a ready market.

xii) There is an ample supply of flats in Worthing in areas where such a development was originally planned or where it has subsequently been allowed as being compatible with surrounding development. This is clearly not the case in the area where the proposed development is sited.

xiii) If the development is allowed it would inevitably result in a flood of similar proposals to the detriment of the area as a whole. The proposal does not comply with relevant Local Plan or Structure Plan policies in terms of its visual impact and does not integrate with the character of the area.

xiv) The developers have compared the height level of the development to the apex of the roof on the building on the opposite corner of Arlington Avenue but this should not be accepted. The tapering structure of the roof is a normal feature of two storey properties in the area and does not justify the inclusion of a third floor level to the proposed building.

xv) The proposal is visually intrusive and would set a precedent for other developments in the future.

xvi) The proposal does not fit in with the general streetscene and looks quite alien to the specific area. Although consideration has been shown to the comparative massing of the existing and new buildings, the visual impact appears far greater than the proposed building's size. We are not opposed to imaginative looking buildings but feel this particular design is not suited to the area. We have seen much more innovative and sympathetic styling of seafront buildings elsewhere.

xvii) Whilst the developer seeks to justify the scheme on the basis of local and regional examples of Art Deco seaside architecture, there are no buildings of an Art Deco design within the Goring Hall area and very few within a radius of three miles.

xviii) Even though the height of the proposed development is no greater than the ridge height of adjacent buildings, the flat roof design gives the proposed development a depth and, consequently, an overall size that completely dominates all nearby properties. The large expanses of glass on all floors of the proposed development is totally out of keeping with the natural look of the predominantly brick and tile build of the properties nearby and in the rest of the Goring Hall area.

xix) The building line on the south west corner has been extended.

xx) The proposed properties are based on utilising as much space as possible to allow the building of eight flats. This means they are building outside of the current building lines and also utilising the space currently used for outbuildings. All the residents in the area signed up to the deeds when purchasing their properties which say that current building lines are not to be exceeded and indeed they are quite specific.

xxi) Whilst the applicant states that neither of the existing buildings are of any architectural interest, No. 30 Marine Drive is one of the oldest buildings on the Goring Hall estate being built in the 1930s and typical both of the period and of the type of building in the area. The proposed design, whilst not being essentially bad in the right location, would in no way sit comfortably in the area and is essentially a very modern design involving extensive use of glass with rendered sections to create a faux Art Deco appearance.

xxii) The density of 44 dwellings per hectare is massively out of scale with the local area density of some 15 dwellings per hectare.

xxiii) The destruction of existing houses is a deplorable proposal given that they are in good condition and design to the excellent standards of the area.

xxiv) Although the requirement for additional residential accommodation is now a priority, great care should be taken to preserve those features of Worthing which give it a special character and the Goring residential hinterland is of exceptional quality which should be maintained.

xxv) We are shocked to see such a modernistic style being introduced into the Goring Hall estate.

xxvi) There are of course flats in Goring seafront, however, apart from one or two buildings opposite the Yacht Club, they are all well designed to look like conventional detached two storey houses, sympathetic in appearance to the neighbouring properties.

xxvii) Cowdray Court provides flats and is closeby but has been designed to fit in with the character of the area.

xxviii) The proposed building is totally inappropriate and is overpowering and would sit badly in this location.

xxix) The design is a pastiche style of the 1930s which went out of favour in this country due to the unsuitability of our climate.

xxx) The proposal will stick out like a sore thumb.

xxxi) The proposal is visually overwhelming to the character and style of existing properties, particularly viewed from the greensward and foreshore footpath.

xxxii) The applicant implies that the proposal consists of two separate buildings. However, the proposal presents elevations of a single large block extending across a substantial proportion of the site.

xxxiii) The applicant is proposing an Art Deco building in order to construct a three storey building and thus avoid the need to provide pitched tiled roof which would conform and be in keeping with the two storey properties with tiled roofs typical of the area.

xxxiv) The proposal is overdevelopment of the site. As a compromise, a development of two storey maisonettes could be entertained.

xxxv) There can be no objection in principle to the redevelopment of houses into apartments so increasing land use. Indeed, there are many apartment buildings in the Goring area. But the general design of the proposed rebuild here is completely unsuited to the neighbourhood.

xxxvi) The design does have some virtues and would be well suited to California or the Costa Brava.

xxxvii) The corner property was used as the Naafi during World War II so is of great historic interest.

xxxviii) The seafront at present is fairly uniform and pleasing to the eye with nothing standing out which is out of place despite the mixture of building styles. The roofs are attractive and there is gentle harmony. This proposed development will indeed break up this harmony and cause great disruption to the neighbouring properties.

xxxix) To renovate this classic 1930's building would be an option retaining some of its original features and restoring the interior into a desirable property as a family home or perhaps flats.

xl) The massing proportions are not compatible with the local area.

xli) On Arlington corner, situated opposite No. 30, is a building of local interest and the new scheme has nothing in common with this architecture and the two are completely incompatible. The proposal is at odds with the stated original aims of the Goring Hall estate, namely to challenge the ill considered and careless form of development which has rendered so many of our resorts crowded, humdrum and characterless.

xlii) The house at No. 30 is of a very pleasing design, constructed in the 1930s with a rare glaze green/blue tiled roof.

xliii) The character of several roads in other parts of Worthing has been destroyed by houses being pulled down and replaced with flats.

xliv) The proposal is of an overbearing scale which would lead to a reduction in natural light to adjoining properties including Nos. 4 and 6 Arlington Avenue.

xlv) The garden of No. 6 Arlington Avenue would be overlooked by the new third floor balcony to the detriment of privacy.

xlvi) The proposed development is very close to No. 4 Arlington Avenue and the impact will be to increase noise and disturbance and the overall view from the garden would be of a sea of white, square buildings with the current sea views blocked off due to the enlarged development.

xlvii) Construction of an underground car park would affect the stability of the surrounding ground and cause subsidence to the adjoining properties.

xlviii) The additional parking and traffic demand generated by the development would add to the existing traffic problems on nearby busy roads to the detriment of parking safety and pedestrian safety inconvenience.

xlix) Marine Drive is a very busy road and although there is a speed limit in place this is rarely adhered to.

l) Additional parking from visitors, especially in the summer, has an enormous impact on traffic congestion in the area.

li) The additional traffic generated by the development would cause noise and disturbance and the underground car park would increase the volume due to the echo effect of the structure. In the Spring and Summer months visitors park both sides of Arlington Avenue which would make entering or leaving the car park, after driving up a ramp, very difficult and hazardous for passing pedestrians.

lii) It is suspected that some of the flats would be used as holiday apartments for people in other areas and therefore would not be fully utilized. Where is the benefit to the Government's need for extra housing on this basis.

liii) All in all, the considered development is purely a way for the developer to make a profit.

liv) The proposal provides insufficient car parking. 20 spaces should be the minimum provided given that the flats may have an occupancy of up to 40 people.

lv) If the proposal is allowed, all site vehicles must access the site via Marine Drive and only park in Marine Drive when necessary. They should not travel down or park in Arlington Avenue. The working hours on the site should be minimised by not starting before 8.00 am and finishing before 6.00 pm Monday to Friday. More stringent control should apply at weekends.

lvi) The submitted documents indicate the applicant has discussed the proposal with adjoining neighbours and general comments are favourable. This statement does not accord with the views of a number of local neighbours.

lvii) The access to the development is unsafe in terms of driver visibility.

lviii) The proposal would cause overshadowing, overlooking and loss of privacy for adjoining neighbours.

lix) Flooding occurs in heavy rain in this location and the proposal could add to problems of flooding.

lx) As rainwater will no longer be able to soak into the ground, where would it go if garages are built underground. What will be the impact to No. 26? Have any provisions been made to divert the water which will no longer be able to soak into the ground.

lxi) The two wind turbines are politically correct but can only be a token gesture. They are unsightly and, on the occasions when they are rotating, they will make a noise level which could cause a nuisance to neighbours. Has any study been made of the noise levels?

lxii) No reference has been made in the Flood Risk Assessment as to how the underground garages and storerooms will add to the flood risk.

In addition to the above representations a 115 signature petition has been received objecting to the proposal on the grounds that the style of the proposed rebuilding is unsuitable to the Goring seafront and does not meet the requirements of the West Sussex Structure Plan or Borough Local Plan.

In addition, the **Worthing Society** has made specific comments and these are reproduced below.

"1. The design of the building which the Statement describes as "Art Deco" is a pastiche of that style but of doubtful merit. It is completely unsympathetic in relation to the neighbouring houses and the Goring Hall estate generally. The proposed building projects beyond the established building lines to Marine Drive and Arlington Avenue and its bulk or volume is considerably greater than the buildings it will replace.

1. *The proposed building contains four storeys, one being an underground basement whereas the buildings in the neighbourhood are typically two storey houses. Whilst the policy laid down in the Local Plan is to encourage an increase in the number of dwellings in any redevelopment of this nature, the proposed increase from 3 units to 8 units is excessive for this locality.*
2. *Opposite the site on the other side of Arlington Avenue is a splendid house known as Arlington Corner which is a Local Interest Building identified on the Approved List in the Worthing Local Plan. The building shown upon the application would undoubtedly conflict with Arlington Corner visually and degrade the neighbourhood generally.*
3. *We oppose the construction of a basement as it creates an unnecessary potential flood risk.*
4. *We are opposed to the provision of wind turbines in principle, as it has not been proven to our satisfaction that they are beneficial. The two turbines shown on the frontage are likely to create a furore amongst local residents.*
5. *We understand that the "Design Architect" referred to on page 8 of the Statement is in fact the Conservation Officer of the WBC Planning Section. We are surprised to see him advising the developer in such a controversial scheme. On the same page the applicant states that he has discussed the proposals with "all the adjoining neighbours, general comments have been favourable". We have made similar enquiries and our findings are to the contrary. The applicant should be asked to support this statement with written evidence.*
6. *If this development is approved it will create a precedent which the Worthing Borough Council will regret in the future. The Council is the steward of Worthing's built environment and should reject it on the fundamental grounds that it is incongruous and an overdevelopment of the site."*

5. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None.

6. PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The main issues raised by this proposal are:-

a) The principle of residential redevelopment and dwelling mix.

b) Impact on living conditions of neighbouring and future occupiers.
c) Loss of the existing properties, quality of design of the replacement. buildings and layout and impact on the character of the area.
d) Access and parking.
e) Flood risk.
f) Sustainable Design
g) Adequacy of development contributions

As such, the application should be principally assessed against saved Worthing Local Plan policies RES7, RES12, BE1, CT3, H10 and H18 and saved West Sussex Structure Plan policies LOC1, ERA1, ERA4, NE1, CH1, CH5, DEV1, DEV3, DEV4 and DEV5. Government policy in PPS1 (Delivering Sustainable Development), PPS3 (Housing), PPS25 (Development and Flood Risk) PPS22 (Renewable Energy) and PPG13 (Transport) and allied design and other guidance is also particularly relevant.

The principle of residential redevelopment and dwelling mix

Support for the principle of residential development is provided by saved Structure Plan Policies LOC1 and ERA1, together with Government policy in PPS1 and PPS3, since the scheme is infill redevelopment on previously developed land, though local facilities are somewhat limited and the site is close to the edge of the urban area. Certainly, the development would make more efficient use of land (resulting in a net increase of 5 dwellings), at a density of approximately 44 dwellings per hectare. This is above the minimum threshold of 30 set out in PPS3 and not inappropriate for this location and the character of the area. A reasonable dwelling mix of 2 and 3 bed room flats, all to the Lifetime Homes standard, also meets the objectives of PPS3 in terms of sustainable communities. Likewise, this "windfall" scheme would contribute towards the Structure Plan housing provision target.

As such, the proposal is acceptable in principle but the acceptability of any specific scheme depends on its particular circumstances and these are considered below.

Impact on living conditions of neighbouring and future occupiers

The scheme has been intelligently designed to avoid problems of overlooking with the main orientation of the development southwards to the seafront and all upper floor windows serving habitable rooms obscure glazed or high level on the inner and outer flanks and to the rear. Likewise, the roof terraces and balconies are confined to the front and lateral views suitably screened. Indeed, the development represents something of an improvement on the existing situation.

The proposed buildings are physically larger than the existing but considerable effort has been made to try and avoid and minimise overbearing by their generally careful arrangement, massing, design and siting. In this respect, their footprints are not that dissimilar from the existing and correspond very closely with the existing by the rear boundary. Building heights also align with the ridges of the existing buildings and their massing

has also been stepped and curved elements introduced to try and soften the corners and diffuse the bulk, particularly at the rear. Additionally, the link building which infills the current gap between Nos. 30 and 28 is recessed and the first floor element, particularly so. Finally, the extensive use of glazing and white render lends the development a light and semi transparent appearance.

Although by no means substantial, the most significant increases in the scheme's massing are confined to the first floor elements of the corner building at the rear and western flank and the east-most building also at the rear and at the front, together with a smaller second floor projections at the rear of both buildings. In this respect, it is recognised that the closest part of the house at No 4 Arlington Avenue is some 6 metres away from the first floor element of the corner building and some 8 metres from the nearest second floor element. Moreover, the relevant elevation of No 4 Arlington Avenue comprises a predominantly blank flank wall with only one upper floor window, which is a small secondary window to a bedroom, and other similarly less sensitive windows on the ground floor. In addition, the first floor rear element of the east-most building only faces the mid-part of the garden of No 4 and is offset from the common boundary by some 7 metres and stands some 13 metres from the nearest part of the actual house.

However, the cumulative impact of this increased massing would be somewhat overbearing, to the detriment of the outlook and sense of enclosure of these neighbours.

On the other hand, the slight projections forward at first floor level of both new buildings and the corner building on the Arlington Avenue frontage are not significant, given the separation distances to the nearest neighbours. Neither is the 1 metre closer to the flanking No 36 Marine Drive that the first floor of the east-most building achieves as this still leaves a separation distance of some 6 metres.

In terms of the impact on views, particularly the seafront, there is, of course, no protected right to such under planning rules but this may still be a material factor, especially allied to impacts on outlook/enclosure discussed above. The applicants have been requested to provide a suitable technical appraisal but this has not been received. In the absence of such an appraisal, provisional judgments are that views currently enjoyed by No 4 Arlington Avenue from one south facing secondary window to a first floor bedroom; secondary window to ground floor lounge and south facing dormer may not be unduly affected. However, oblique views currently enjoyed from windows serving first floor bedrooms facing east may be further restricted. The defunct and disused roof terraces on the east and south parts of No 4 may also be affected but some views should remain. Similar considerations apply to No 6 Arlington Avenue, to the north. .

A natural light impact study had been submitted which indicates that overshadowing of the houses and gardens to the north of the development (Nos. 4 and 6 Arlington Avenue) would not be significantly harmed at any time of the year compared to the existing situation.

The proposed vehicular access utilises an existing access point. Though there would be a material increase in traffic, the separation distance of 12 metres from No 4 Arlington Avenue and the additional landscaping in the front garden of the development and raised height of the common boundary should avoid any unacceptable impacts. However, the applicant has indicated his willingness to resite the access a metre or so to the south if required to provide an additional buffer area, for example, to block headlights from traffic turning right into the site.

The applicant has indicated that the wind turbines are designed to emit a very low level of noise, well below ambient levels. However, the Environmental Health Manager considers that, whilst the turbines may well be acceptable in amenity terms, the technical justification for this conclusion has not been advanced and concerns remain. The aim is that the underground car park would be naturally ventilated but if necessary may be mechanically ventilated. The Environmental Health Manager does not anticipate any significant problems, provided the ventilation ducting is sited well away from any dwelling and subject to precise details.

Impacts on the stability of nearby buildings are generally dealt with under other regulatory means such as through building control or civil law.

Loss of the existing properties, quality of design of the replacement. buildings and layout and impact on the character of the area.

Of the two existing properties, No 30 on the corner is more characterful with its green pantile roof and white rendered finish and blends in more satisfactorily with the inter–war character of the seafront. However, it is not a particularly distinguished example of such period architecture, and, furthermore, its façade has altered for the worse and is in a somewhat rundown condition. No 28 is an anonymous 1970s building of no merit whatsoever. Neither enjoy any protection and their loss would be acceptable, subject to a high quality replacement.

Turning to the replacement buildings, there is much to commend in the form of the scheme. The footprint is broadly similar to the existing buildings, respecting the prevailing building line: the slight encroachment forwards of the main axis of the building together with the corner conservatory are not significant in overall townscape terms. Furthermore, the height of the buildings is no taller than the existing building (and is shorter than Arlington Corner, opposite), though, clearly, there is a significant increase in bulk above eaves level and the overall volume of the development is substantially greater than the existing houses.

However, significant efforts to step and articulate the buildings to break up the bulk have been made, including curved corners and features and to respond to the location. Importantly, the massing of the buildings and layout of the curtilage space and boundaries aim to reproduce the rhythm, form and character of the street by presenting the impression of two, distinctive but complementary, villas set in their own separate and delineated grounds. In

particular, the corner building seeks to express its corner location architecturally by a slightly grander scale and treatment, (though with only partial success). Additionally, the link building is recessed and materially smaller in scale and employing extensive glazing so that it appears particularly light and semi-transparent, though it may still be preferable to restrict this to a single storey. Furthermore, the two blocks/plots have marked out their own entrances, gardens, gates and fences/landscaping.

Not the least of the scheme's commendable features, is the underground parking. This conceals otherwise obtrusive car parking and allows a large, attractive front landscaped garden, to be retained, which is characteristic to the area. The vehicular entrance is, likewise, tucked around the corner, well away from sea front views.

In terms of the essential architectural style – contemporary interpretation of modernist, art deco style – this is light and attractive and not inappropriate for the character of the area, bearing in mind the age of many of the seafront houses, incorporation of certain modernist architectural elements in Nos. 4 and 6 Arlington Avenue and the diversity of styles along the along the wider seafront, including various modernist/art deco style buildings dotted around and nearby hinterland. Indeed, seafronts have traditionally accommodated more exuberant architecture and a suitably styled and scaled development would build on this tradition, enhance the seafront and help rejuvenate the town. Members will recall a neo-Art Deco block of 8 flats was recently approved on the beachfront in Eirene Road and another scheme has been approved at Blue Waters, Sea Drive, Ferring just across the Gap in Arun. Neither the scale, nor style of the current proposal harms the setting of Arlington Corner on the opposite side of Arlington Avenue which is a Local Interest Building and would balance and complement this as a feature building at the gateway to this attractive road.

That said, the current scheme falls short of the high standard of design required in this sensitive and important location, both in terms of its impact on the townscape and its intrinsic architectural quality and composition. The first concern is its massing in relation to nearby properties at Nos. 4 and 6 Arlington Avenue. The proximity of the first and second floor rear projections sit uncomfortably and overpower these more diminutive and properties. A better relationship to the eaves of No 4 and cut-backs in massing of the rear of the corner building is necessary to achieve a more stepped and satisfactory arrangement. Some reduction in the overall height of the corner building to align with its eastern neighbour would also help.

The second concern is the architectural composition and integration with the townscape. The scheme is certainly "purer" and less compromising in its architectural approach than its contemporaries in Eirene Road and Blue Waters referred to earlier and suffers accordingly. Aspects of the scale and bulk are unsatisfactory and the scheme requires the depth of the second floor (pavilion) on the corner building to be reduced as this currently relates unsatisfactorily to the overall building and is too dominant and alien in scale. Greater use of curves to soften the two buildings' appearance and create a more integrated and interesting design are also necessary throughout,

together with alterations to the fenestration to achieve a finer and graduated scale and improvements to the entrances.

Access and parking.

The Highway Authority comments are awaited and will be reported at Committee.

Subject to the above, it is noted that the site lies close to the edge of the urban area and is not well served by public transport or close to shops and other facilities and so is reliant on the car. At sixteen spaces, the parking provided is, nevertheless, in excess of the maximum of 12 spaces indicated in current standards. It is tolerable but a smaller provision would also be acceptable.

The proposed vehicular access uses an established point of access, well set back from Marine Drive and the design appears to be generally adequate, with sufficient width for two cars to pass and sightlines and tracking indicated. There is generous space for cycle parking in the basement. Pedestrian access from Marine Drive is convenient and safe.

A Stage 1 Safety Audit has been received and the applicants have agreed a number of detailed measures to address the concerns raised. In addition to the features indicated above, these include refuse storage at the front to avoid the need for refuse vehicles to enter the site and securing parking restrictions adjacent to the entrance if required by the Highway Authority.

Flood risk.

A Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been submitted as required by PPS25 (Flood Risk and Development) in view of the locality being an effective 3a Flood Risk area (High Risk) due to the land being 4.9 metres AOD and therefore 0.6 metres below predicted surge tide levels of 5.5 AOD (1 in 200 years event) for 2115.

The FRA comments that:

"The site is at risk from tidal flooding by the sea overflowing the bund at the back of the foreshore and being trapped behind the bund.

The site is at risk of tidal flooding by the sea overflowing the bund at the back of the foreshore and being trapped in the behind the bund.

The tidal flood level has been assessed as being 5.5m AOD. Other, small risks from overland flooding and lack of drainage have also been identified.

Although the 5.5m AOD level includes allowances for sea level rise, it does not include waves, so it is prudent to set a flood defence level for the site of 5.8m AOD.

Mitigation measures can be used to prevent the premises from being flooded. These include either raising the Ground Floor level to above 5.8m AOD or providing a flood wall to this level, with any openings fitted with flood gates. The Lower Ground Floor can be further protected by extending the retaining walls to at least 5.8m AOD and installing a pump to deal with any rainfall or water ingress.

Contingency plans should be formulated and residents provided with instructions about what to do during a flood.

Due to tidal flooding being predictable and short duration, the stress of being flooded upon occupants should be low. As the depth of flooding at the northern end of the site is shallow, evacuation and provision of emergency assistance during a flood event is considered not to be hazardous. Therefore the consequences of a flood upon the residents of the re-development (the "Exception Test") are acceptable.

The use of SuDS techniques for draining the site means that the proposed development should reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere when compared with the existing situation. SuDS measures proposed include permeable construction over the Lower Ground Floor and draining the roofs and balconies as slowly as possible."

Suitable flood proof measures have been incorporated into the scheme, most particularly the flood wall and flood gates; flood resistant construction up to 5.5 metres AOD; pumps and anti flood valves for area below 5.8 metres AOD and various Sustainable Drainage (SuDS) measures including rain water buts and rainwater attenuation on the roofs. Flood contingency plans are also to be displayed on the communal entrance areas.

The comments of the Environment Agency are awaited and will be reported to the Committee but the Borough Principal Engineer praise for the FRA instils confidence in the rigour of the assessment and the efficacy of the measures proposed and the development is likely to be an acceptable risk. Turning to the other tests set out in PPS25, the redevelopment replaces existing dwellings in an otherwise sustainable brownfield location and appear not to increase risks elsewhere, and, given, the limited available land for residential development in the town, the proposal is considered to comply with the relevant sequential and exceptions tests.

Sustainable design

Whilst retaining the existing buildings clearly has some merit in sustainability terms, the replacement scheme has commendable green credentials, certainly with a smaller carbon footprint in operational terms than any conversion/refurbishment could reasonably expect. It would be designed to Level 3 of the Government's Code for Sustainable Homes (broadly equating to Eco – Homes "very good standard") with measures such as high thermal insulation, good natural light and ventilation. The possible use of solar voltaic panels on the roof of the link building and/or district heating/bio mass boilers. The facility to introduce geo thermal heat pumps is also provided for.

Additionally, two wind turbines are shown. Whilst these are welcome in principle, the visual impact in the highly prominent location shown and the availability of other less intrusive sources of micro generation renewable energy lend support for omitting these features. Finally, a waste minimisation strategy is proposed, seeking to minimise and recycle waste from demolition and excavation.

Adequacy of development contributions

The scale of development requires a development contribution towards upgrading local transport measures to accommodate the pressure on local facilities. The precise sum required is awaited from the Highway Authority. The applicants have indicated their willingness in principle to make the required development contribution, secured by a legal agreement.

Conclusions

The proposal is acceptable in principle and contains many commendable features. However, the quality of the design currently falls short of the high standard required and the arrangement of the massing is problematic. As such, the current scheme would have an unacceptable impact on the neighbours to the north as well as the townscape. Whilst there may be scope to address these issues through comparatively modest modification, the current scheme is unacceptable and should be refused.

7. RECOMMENDATION

SUBJECT TO THE COMMENTS OF THE RELEVANT STATUTORY CONSULTEES, REFUSE PLANNING PERMISSION ON THE FOLLOWING GROUNDS:

1. The proposal would, by reason of its siting, massing and design, appear unduly dominant and incongruous in the street scene and result in an unacceptable loss of outlook and sense of enclosure for the occupiers of the neighbouring properties to the north and fails to achieve the required overall quality of design. As such, it would be detrimental to the character and appearance of the area and living conditions of neighbouring occupiers and conflicts with Saved Worthing Local Plan policies BE1, H18 and CT3 and Saved West Sussex Structure Plan policies DEV1 and CH1.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Observations of Sussex Police Crime Prevention Officer
Observations of the Assistant Director (Property and Facilities Management)

13th November 2007